



AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

The following claim set replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-18. (canceled)

19. (currently amended) A biodegradable fibrous support for soil mulching ~~of the soil for~~ during long-term growing periods of up to 36 months, said fibrous support comprising a coating of ~~being coated with~~ an aqueous solution which is comprised of ~~comprising biodegradable natural latex, characterized in that the aqueous solution comprises from 5 to 50 % by weight of biodegradable natural latex obtained from rubber tree, the balance to 100% including water, and stabilizing and preservative agents for of said latex, wherein the solution forming, on the support, a coating comprises the biodegradable latex in an amount of 10 to 200 g/m² as dry matter of latex, advantageously from 90 to 100 g/m², and wherein the said preservative agents are selected being chosen from the group consisting of comprising animal proteins, or vegetable proteins, such as glycerin, or chitosan, or tannins, or indigo by themselves or as a mixture and mixtures thereof.~~

20. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 19, wherein the ~~characterized in that said~~ natural latex is prevulcanized.

21. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 19, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the natural latex is obtained from *Hevea Brasiliensis* and has a dry rubber concentration of at least ~~of~~ 60 %.

22. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 19, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the stabilizing agents are selected ~~chosen~~ from the group consisting of ~~comprising the~~ vegetable proteins, ~~(casein, soya protein), the mineral fillers (talc, calcium carbonate), by themselves or as a mixture and mixtures thereof.~~

23. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 19, wherein
~~characterized in that~~ the coating solution consists, by weight, of:
from 5 to 50 %, biodegradable natural latex obtained from rubber tree,
from 1 to 20 %, proteins,
from 0 to 20 %, talc,
from 1 to 20 % of chitosan, and/or indigo, and/or glycerin, and/or tannins, and
~~the balance to 100 % consisting of water.~~

24. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 19, further comprising
~~characterized in that it contains~~ thermo-bonding fibres representing in an amount from 5
to 50 %, advantageously between 10 and 15 %, by weight, of the support.

25. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 24, wherein
~~characterized in that~~ the thermo bonding fibres consist ~~are~~ exclusively ~~composed~~ of
polylactic acid fibres.

26. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 19, ~~characterized in that~~
~~it is provided with~~ further comprising a grid associated with at least a part of the support,
wherein the grid includes threads comprised , ~~which is either maintained on the whole~~
~~or part of at least one face of the support, or incorporated into the whole or part of the~~
~~mass of the support, said grid being produced of a biodegradable polymer selected~~
~~polymers chosen from the group~~ consisting of comprising polylactic acid,
polycaprolactone, viscose, modified viscose, polyhydroxybutyrate, and
polyhydroxyalcanoate, ~~by themselves or as a mixture~~ and mixtures thereof.

27. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 26, wherein
~~characterized in that~~ the grid consists ~~is made exclusively~~ of modified viscose threads.

28. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 26, wherein
~~characterized in that~~ the weight of the grid is between 10 and 50 g/m², ~~advantageously~~
~~in the order of 20 g/m².~~

29. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 26, wherein
~~characterized in that~~ the grid is positioned exclusively in an ~~the~~ area of ~~the~~ fixing points
of the support on the ground.

30. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 26, wherein
~~characterized in that~~ the grid is glued directly on ~~the~~ a surface of the fibrous support by
means of a water-resistant biodegradable glue which is selected ~~chosen~~ from the group
~~comprising~~ consisting of ethylene polyvinyl alcohol (EVOH), and polyvinyl alcohol
(PVA), ~~by themselves or as a mixture and mixtures thereof~~, the glue being present in an
amount representing between 5 and 50%, ~~advantageously 15 %~~, by weight of the grid.

31. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 26, wherein
~~characterized in that~~ the grid is positioned unrolled directly on the fibrous support ~~during~~
~~its manufacture.~~

32. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 19, which further
comprises ~~characterized in that it contains~~ a hydrophobic resin ~~representing from 0,5 in~~
an amount from 0.5 to 15% by weight of the support, wherein the hydrophobic resin is at
least one selected ~~chosen~~ from the group consisting of ~~comprising~~ urea-formaldehyde
resins, melamine-formaldehyde resins, polyamide-amine-epichlorhydrin resins,
polyethyleneimine resins, starch derivatives, ~~by themselves or as a mixture and~~
mixtures thereof.

33. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 19, which further
comprises ~~characterized in that it contains~~ carbon black ~~representing from 0,5 in an~~
amount from 0.5 to 4% by weight of the support.

34. (currently amended) A support according to Claim 19, which comprises
~~characterized in that the fibre composition of the support is as follows:~~ from 40 to 100%
~~, advantageously from 70 to 90 %,~~ by weight of coniferous unbleached or bleached kraft
fibres, and from 0 to 60% ~~, advantageously from 10 to 30 %,~~ by weight of deciduous
unbleached or bleached kraft fibres.

35. (currently amended) Support according to Claim 19, which comprises
~~characterized in that the fibre composition of the support is as follows:~~ from 80 to 100%
by weight of annual plant fibres, and from 0 to 20% by weight of coniferous unbleached
or bleached kraft fibres.

36. (currently amended) Support according to Claim 19, which comprises
~~characterized in that the fibre composition of the support is as follows:~~ from 20 to 100%
by weight of coniferous bleached kraft fibres, from 0 to 40% by weight of annual plant
fibres, and from 0 to 40% by weight of rayon fibres.

37. (new) A support according to Claim 19, wherein the latex in the coating is
present in an amount of between 90 and 100 g/m² as dry matter.

38. (new) A support according to Claim 22, wherein the stabilizing agent
comprises casein, soya protein, talc or calcium carbonate.

39. (new) A support according to Claim 24, wherein the thermobonding fibres are
present in an amount between 10 and 15% by weight of the support.

40. (new) A support according to claim 26, wherein the grid is associated with at
least a part of at least one support face of the support.

41. (new) A support according to claim 40, wherein the grid is associated with the
whole of the at least one support face of the support.

42. (new) A support according to claim 26, wherein the grid is incorporated into at least a part of the support.

43. (new) A support according to claim 42, wherein the grid is incorporated into the whole of the support.

44. (new) A support according to Claim 28, wherein the weight of the grid is about 20 g/m².

45. (new) A support according to Claim 30, wherein the glue is present in an amount of about 15% by weight of the grid.

46. (new) A support according to Claim 34, which comprises 70 to 90% by weight of coniferous unbleached or bleached kraft fibres, and from 10 to 30% by weight of deciduous unbleached or bleached kraft fibres.